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“California’s Troubadour”: One Layman’s Impact in a Far West Diocese

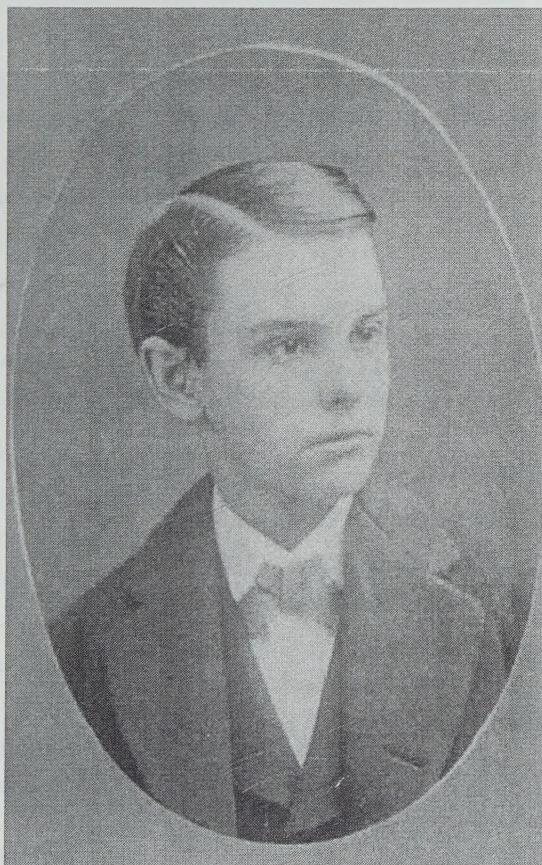
Clarence Thomas Urmey (1858-1923) called himself a “California Troubadour.” He was the first native Californian to publish a book of poems, and for decades he contributed to the country’s best and best-selling magazines. While his fame as a poet did not last, the influence of his work for the Episcopal Church is still felt today and was recently celebrated in a parish he founded.

Clarence Urmey’s life tells a story of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century church not from the perspective of the seminary or pulpit, but from the choir stall and pew. He was more than another writer drawn to Anglicism by the cadences of common prayer. He was the rare layman who embodied the vying influences within the Episcopal Church of his time. He developed a catholic outlook, not only as the result of arguments rippling from far-away seminaries, but in response to influences he met in California. He was influenced as well by an evangelical

heritage that found expression in his literary work, personal piety and missionary zeal.

The infant Clarence Urmey was laid in an evangelical cradle. His father, William Smith Urmey, came to Cali-

fornia in 1853. With a letter in hand from his church in New York, he presented himself at the Methodist Church in San Francisco and was admitted on probation as a minister. Almost immediately he was sent to a circuit among the gold mines of Amador County, where his mere arrival resulted in a doubling of the membership. William Urmey preached in school houses and saloons, converted the lost, established a church in Sutter Creek, and laid a cornerstone for one in Oroville. Eventually he and his family came to know all of northern California as the Methodist system of itinerancy moved them every year or two from the mountains to the valleys or the bay. The Rev. Urmey became a presiding elder overseeing a district, and closed his



Clarence Urmey as a youth. Courtesy of Special Collections, California State Library.

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11-14 June 2013

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Spring 2013	15 February 2013	3 April 2013
Summer 2013	15 May 2013	15 July 2013
Fall 2013	15 August 2013	15 October 2013

For information on Book Reviews, contact Philip Ayers at
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Corrections and Amplifications

In the Fall 2012 issue, Vol. L No. 4, in *The Story of the Community of St. Mary* at the top of page 12, the second sentence should read “They were ‘forced’ to pray five times a day and were thought to be possibly held against their will.”

California's Troubadour, *continued from page 1*

career more than fifty years later, as he had begun, by preaching in a mining camp.

Clarence's mother, Emma Thomas, arrived in California following an Isthmus passage in 1855. She was the sixteen-year-old daughter of the Rev. Eleazer Thomas, who brought mature leadership to the California Methodists. The Rev. Thomas became editor of the *California Christian Advocate*, the Methodist newspaper that circulated throughout the state, and agent of the New York Book Concern, a publishing arm of Methodism that distributed on the frontier devotional books and a wide range of literature. His grandfather's connections assured that young Clarence had as much exposure to books, learning and literary talk as any boy growing up in the Far West.

The sources of Clarence Urmy's uncommon intensity become evident as his story unfolds. When he was a teenager President Grant appointed his grandfather, the Rev. Thomas, a peace commissioner to the Modoc Indians. The tribe recently had left the reservation and fought the U. S. Army in northeast California. Though he had a premonition of death, the Rev. Thomas hurried to the area in the spring of 1873, hoping to secure a just settlement for the Modocs.

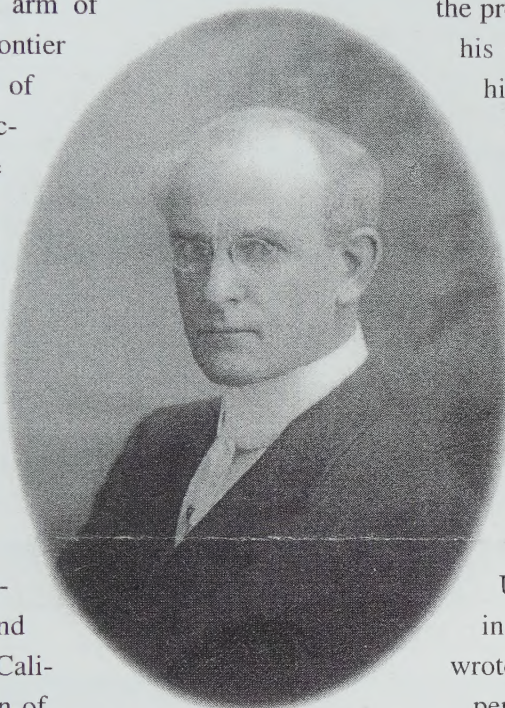
At a peace conference he and a military aide were murdered by disgruntled Modoc warriors.

The death of the Rev. Thomas fell heavily on the Urmy family, and especially on Clarence's mother, Emma Urmy. Before the blow of her father's murder, Emma Urmy's health was already frail. At only thirty-three she was worn out by the exertions of pioneer life, the bearing of seven children (five of whom survived her) and the strain of the itinerancy. She died in April 1874 when Clarence was fifteen. Her death accounts for the elegiac strain in his poems.

In the years following his mother's death Clarence attended Napa College, a Methodist institution that was

later incorporated into the University of the Pacific (now at Stockton). He studied liberal arts and music and was an orator at the graduation exercises in 1880 when he received his Bachelor of Arts. Not the ministry or the law, engineering or business appealed to Urmy. His interests were aesthetic, and he wanted to live a life in appreciation of beauty.

Supporting some semblance of a beautiful life became his almost constant anxiety for the rest of his days and the pressures of it probably brought him to his own premature death. He supported himself primarily as a music teacher, organist and choir director. In middle age he launched a new career as music and drama critic for the *San Jose Mercury-Herald*. He achieved a secure income only in the last years of his life when he was elected to the faculty of San Jose State Teachers College (now State University). The money he earned from writing went towards travel and a summer cottage.



Clarence Urmy. Courtesy of Special Collections, California State Library.

Urmy's early poetry began to appear in print while he was still a student. He wrote initially for the Methodist newspaper and then for papers in Sacramento and San Francisco in an era when papers published poems. His work was soon appearing in the *Overland*

Monthly. Eventually his name would become familiar to readers of the older literary magazines such as *The Century* and the slick, large-circulation magazines such as *Cosmopolitan*, *Munsey's*, *Harper's Bazaar* and *Vogue*. His first book of poems, *A Rosary of Rhyme* was published in San Francisco (1884), and was followed by *A Vintage of Verse* (1887) and *A California Troubadour* (1912).

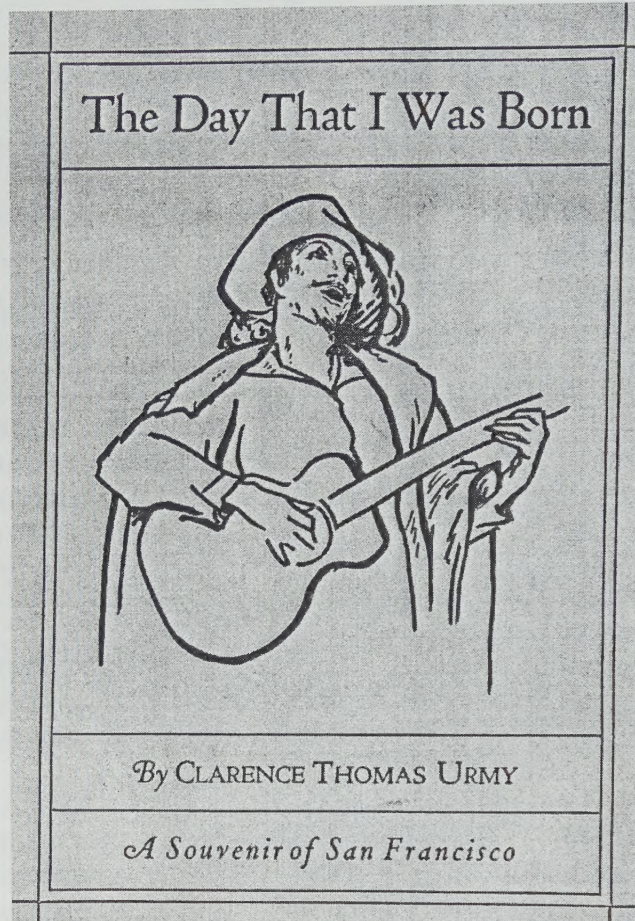
Clarence Urmy wrote the kind of parlor verse that defined the "genteel tradition" of his day. Yet even today a reader can feel beneath the crust of Victorian propriety a spirit moved by the beauty of California and the fragility of its landscape. Urmy strung his poems like

beads and appropriated California's Roman Catholic past in images of tolling bells, vespers and benedictions, nuns in habits and padres walking dusty trails. To Urmy California's Catholic heritage suggested an alternative to the spirit of industry and commerce that had leaped unbridled to the Pacific Coast. In the images of a pre-Anglo and pre-industrial California he sought space for imagination and mystery, and refuge from the acquisitive drive that wreaked destruction all around. A personal piety and faith were the pulse of his message. His best poems—such as “As I Came Down Mount Tamalpais” and “A Night in the Redwoods” (two poems occasionally reprinted today)—express an irrepressible Christian hope.

Urmy's appreciation for California's catholic heritage found further expression not in the Roman Catholic but in the Episcopal Church. Shortly after graduation he became organist at the Episcopal Church in Petaluma. There he found a heart-felt worship that did not focus on evangelical-style conversion but was consonant with the catholicism he had come to admire. Later he moved to San Jose to serve as organist at Trinity Episcopal Church (now Pro-Cathedral). Clarence Urmy drew both notoriety and satisfaction from his work as a church musician and with special performances drew people to the church.

Taking particular pains in his dual role as organist and choirmaster, Clarence Urmy was a lasting influence in the lives of many choristers. According to a report in an Episcopal magazine: “Scores of boys and men have

been led to become communicants through the influence and churchmanship of the well-beloved choirmaster.” He took satisfaction in seeing many of these boys off to the universities at Berkeley and Palo Alto.



This image from Urmy's poetry collection of 1912 was done by Loren Barton (1893-1975), an etcher, illustrator and watercolorist. The idealized sketch of the California Troubadour was commissioned by Clarence Urmy's sister, Mabel Urmy Seares, who was editor and publisher of *California Southland* magazine.

During his years at Trinity, Clarence Urmy grew increasingly committed to catholic ideas that were seeding themselves at that time in Episcopal dioceses across America. A sacramental piety, attended by ritual and aesthetics in worship, provided him with the kind of emotional expression that satisfied his meticulous personality. He collected pamphlets from the House of the Resurrection, an Anglican monastery in Yorkshire, England, that encouraged personal devotions. In 1890 he organized the first vested choir of men and boys in the diocese. He regularly referred to the celebration of the Lord's Supper in the catholic manner as the “Mass” and his poems made obvious his veneration of The Virgin.

Eventually Urmy's commitment to the church eclipsed his work as a poet. He spent about a year (1907 – 08) in New York, where he went to prevent himself from growing “hay-seed,” and to call on editors and re-ignite his writing career. But then he neglected the muse for the church. As he wrote to his sister:

I have had a strange experience in New York. I came on to ‘be literary,’ and lo, *The Church* has come between me and everything else in my life and I must give a whole separate letter to that phase of my

California's Troubadour, *continued from page 4*

visit. You will probably not be able to understand it; I don't understand it myself.

Urmey was a faithful worshipper in New York and visited many churches. He visited the Episcopal Order of the Holy Cross at its house on the Hudson River. There he spoke with the Rev. James Otis Sargent Huntington about extending the order and prayed that a sister house might be established in California. Nothing came of this in Urmey's time. And no surviving correspondence explains Urmey's "strange experience." The only explanation is in his subsequent actions.

A few months after he returned to San Jose, Urmey was licensed as a lay-reader by the Rt. Rev. William Ford Nichols, Bishop of the Diocese of California. He was initially authorized to read the scriptures and preside over Morning and Evening Prayer at Trinity. Animated by the evangelical energy that had prompted his father and grandfather to come to California to build churches, he turned his attention toward missions. He presided at services at St. John Episcopal Mission in Saratoga in the coastal foothills, which was then a community of ranches and a summer retreat for residents of San Jose and San Francisco.

Clarence Urmey responded in September 1911 when a group of Episcopalians appealed for help in establishing a mission in Sunnyvale, a rural settlement of 1,500 residents. The town had an iron works and canneries and was surrounded by orchards of cherries, peaches, apricots and plums. Bishop Nichols designated him "lay-reader-in-charge" and he presided at Evening Prayer, delivered homilies and led the mission for two or three years until a priest arrived. One of the founding women, Anna Berry, remarked that Urmey was "the ardent soul whose efforts brought this little mission into being, and who has ably conducted its services through a period of years." He gave the mission, she added, "a beautiful example of devotion."

In May 1923 Clarence Urmey suffered a stroke while teaching at San Jose State. He died a week later.

In 2011 St. Thomas Episcopal Church (now in the Diocese of El Camino Real) celebrated its centennial with a year of commemorative events and special services. Through the kindness of the dean and congregation of Trinity Cathedral, centennial processions were led by a cross that had been inscribed many years before "to the glory of God in memory of Clarence Urmey."

*Gage McKinney
gagemckinney@sbcglobal.net*



Clarence Urmey, center rear, with the choir at Trinity Episcopal Church, San Jose.
Photo courtesy Archives, St. Thomas Episcopal Church, Sunnyvale, California.

Julia Randle Receives John W. Davis Award

During the Annual Council of the Diocese of Virginia, the Rev. Christopher Agnew, past president of the National Episcopal Historians and Archivists (NEHA), presented the organization's 2012 Canon John W. Davis Award to Julia E. Randle. The award, named for its first recipient, long-time NEHA president Canon John W. Davis, pays tribute to outstanding contributions made by a NEHA member to the work of the organization and/or the fields of Episcopal Church history and archives.

Randle, a long-time member of NEHA, was on the planning committee for NEHA's reorganization in the late 1990's and was named president in 2000. She worked tirelessly for the organization, overseeing it through its transition to the present structure and helping to more than double its membership. At the end of her three-year term, NEHA applauded her accomplishments. Her husband, Russell Randle, also paid her tribute—and then made a generous contribution to the endowment fund “in thanksgiving for the return of my wife.”

Randle was archivist at the Bishop Payne Library of the Virginia Theological Seminary (VTS) from 1990 until early 2012 when she accepted appointment to become registrar and historiographer of the Episcopal Diocese of Virginia. A graduate of the College of William and Mary and George Washington University, her positions previous to VTS included the Registrar's Office of two Smithsonian Institution bureaus and curator/archivist of Christ Church, Alexandria.

The Rev. Robert Prichard, professor at the seminary and president of the Historical Society of the Episcopal Church (HSEC), said of Randle, “She transformed a collection that was in such disorder that the head librarian would not even allow faculty members to visit it into a first-class collection that is regularly used by scholars from both within and outside the institution.” Added the Very Rev. Ian Markham, the seminary's dean, “She knows more about the seminary than almost anyone else alive.”

Randle played a major role in the development of the African American Episcopal Historical Collection, which is housed at the seminary library. Said Prichard, “She deserves major credit for transforming the Collec-



The Rev. Christopher Agnew presenting Julia Randle with The Canon W. Davis Award in recognition of distinguished service to the ministries of Ecclesiastical History and Archives in the Episcopal Diocese of Virginia and the Virginia Theological Seminary, and to the Church at large.
Photo courtesy Emily Cherry.

tion from an idea (suggested by the Historical Society, which sought the seminary's assistance) into a reality. She played a major role in preparing for the 2007 observance of 400 years of the Church in Virginia. And she provided major research support and illustrations for a series of three historical volumes produced at the seminary: *No Turning Back*, *Grace in Motion*, and *Hail! Holy Hill!*”

In addition to her work at the seminary, Randle has helped the Diocese of Virginia research records pertaining to church property as it litigated against parishes that have recently left the Episcopal Church.

A. Margaret Landis

Historiographer and Archivist Reports

In an attempt to keep one another apprised of the work of historians and archivists from around the church, we asked diocesan historiographers and archivists to submit their reports to their diocesan conventions to The Historiographer. The following are the reports received.

The Diocese of New Jersey: 229th Convention

The Archivist's Report

We continue processing the vast collection of the Diocese of New Jersey, slowly and steadily. And just when we think there may be (some day) an end to the work, we'll receive a considerable number of cubic feet of material — cubic feet being the way that archivists measure size — from parishes that have been closed. The processing of closed parish materials is a delicate one. There are items that must be preserved in perpetuity, such as parish registers, service books, vestry minutes, and the like, but there are other materials whose fate is less certain. What correspondence from rectors or vicars does one preserve? What photographs? And how about service leaflets, parish newsletters, and special event materials? Every closed parish or mission is treated on a case-by-case basis and we try to make wise decisions. In a perfect world, we would save everything. But the world, alas, is far from perfect and — given the square footage at our disposal — we often preserve less than we'd like.

The difficult and complex project of the conservation and restoration of the circa 1815 episcopal vestments of the Right Reverend John Croes, first bishop of New Jersey — his rochet, chimere, and scarf — is nearly done. It was a painstakingly slow process. The work was entrusted to a highly regarded textile conservator in the Washington, DC area, who worked with Smithsonian Institution on the conservation of the gowns of the First Ladies.

With regard to artifacts, the Diocese of New Jersey was able, through a stroke of eBay luck, to acquire a very rare miniature of the Reverend Thomas Bradbury Chandler (1726-1790), long-time rector of Saint John's Church in Elizabeth. Bradbury was a seminal figure in the history of the Episcopal Church, an early and strenuous proponent for a bishop for the colonies. After the American Revolution he was asked to be first Bishop of Nova Scotia, but he refused, owing to ill health, and re-

mained at St John's Church until his death in 1790. His daughter, Mary Goodin Chandler, married John Henry Hobart, the great third Bishop of New York.

There are virtually no known portraits of Chandler, so this miniature — painted as mourning brooch for a member of Chandler's family — is a significant and important accession.

*Respectfully submitted,
Canon Cynthia McFarland, January 2013*

The Registrar and Historiographer's Report

Part of my responsibility as registrar is to maintain a thorough inventory of the holdings and records of the Diocese of New Jersey. That has become, paradoxically, both easier and harder, because a vast number of books and materials connected to the diocese are now available online at no cost, digitized through the 'Google books' initiative primarily, but other digital initiatives as well, such as HathiTrust.

Amongst those digitized holdings are all the Journals of Convention, from 1785 (the first convention) through 1920. I have compiled a roster of all the digitized journals in chronological order, with a note of the dates of the convention, the place, and the number of the convention. You can find the roster here: newjersey.anglican.org/Diocese/Archives/DioNJConvJournals.html

The number of books related to the Diocese of New Jersey — parish histories, biographies, and so on — that have been digitized is also growing exponentially. Finding ways to ensure that we have permanent access to those materials is important, and often something of a conundrum. The solution isn't to download and print the materials! By this time in technological history, we can presume that Internet availability and access can be taken for granted, like electricity and running water. Because of this, it's important to consider ways of seamlessly integrating the tangible and the digital. To that end, this past year we upgraded the primary com-

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The Rev. John Henry Prescott: **St. Ann's Church, Sayville, Long Island, New York,** **Rector from 1884-1921**

The Reverend John Henry Prescott was first and foremost an Episcopal Priest. However, during his 48 years as Rector of St. Ann's Episcopal Church, Sayville, Long Island, New York, he was also a fireman, a first class scholar, raconteur, citizen and friend. Among his friends he counted the Roosevelt family, relations of President Theodore Roosevelt, as well as wealthy landowners, business men, fishermen and just plain folk.

The young Mr. Prescott came to Sayville as a Deacon, to do a job for the Episcopal Diocese of Long Island, but he ended up doing much more than that, he left his spirit with the people of Sayville and its surrounding communities. His name appears in many of the local history books as well as in memoirs. Some of the best items in the Sayville newspaper, *The Suffolk County News*, are about the genial padre of St. Ann's.

The Rev. Prescott was born in New York City, 24 September 1848, the son of John Prescott (1818-1904) and Ann Thomas Prescott. His father was born in Somersetshire, England, but he had spent the majority of his life in Brooklyn (60 years) and was a parishioner of Grace Episcopal Church, Conselyea Street. He was buried in Greenwood Cemetery, Brooklyn. His wife Ann, the Rev. Prescott's mother, died in or about 1888. The elder John Prescott was one of the best known stevedores in New York City, a senior member of the firm of Robin and Company which loaded packet ships sailing to London. This work was not to be in the future of his son.

John Henry Prescott graduated from the Philadelphia Divinity School in 1873. He had been ordained a Deacon in Brooklyn on 4 June 1871 and on 13 July 1873,

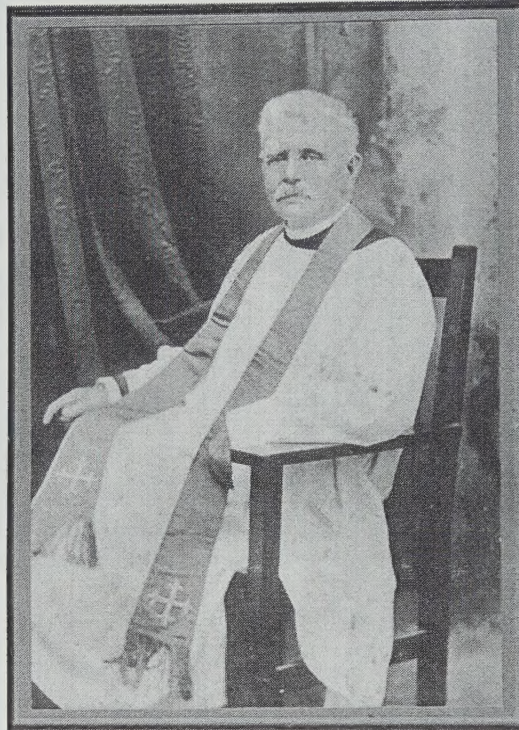
Bishop Littlejohn of Long Island assigned him to missionary work in Suffolk County. He was put in charge of St. Barnabas Chapel, Sayville and St. Paul's in Patchogue. When Prescott arrived, St. Barnabas Chapel was elevated to a mission, and it came under the jurisdiction of the Diocese through the

Associate Mission for Queens and Suffolk Counties headed by the Rev. Thomas Cook.

The new clergyman and the Diocese he was entering were both starting out fresh. The Long Island Diocese had just been lopped off the much larger New York Diocese, and the first Bishop elected and installed. It was at the 1868 Convention that a motion for a Long Island Diocese was proposed by William Ludlow of St. John's Oakdale. His motion was to create a new Diocese to be made up of parishes from Kings, Queens and Suffolk Counties. A sum of \$60,000.00 had been set by the New York Diocese at convention as the minimum starting

budget for the new diocese. \$50,109.75 was pledged. Littlejohn, the first Long Island bishop, had a lot to do in his first years in office. The parishes represented at the 1868 gathering numbered 32 from Brooklyn, 17 from Queens and 7 from Suffolk County. If the Long Island Diocese was to thrive, a lot of missionary work had to be done.

When Bishop Littlejohn appointed Prescott to the work of establishing and growing parishes in Suffolk County, he was praying for a better representation from the end of Long Island. The young Deacon was coming to an area just vacated by the Rev. Charles Douglas, who as Rector of St. John's Church, Oakdale and Supply Priest at St. Paul's Church, Patchogue, encouraged the building of a chapel, St. Barnabas, Sayville. This was done to



The Rev. John Henry Prescott.
Courtesy Sayville Historical Society.

John Henry Prescott, *continued from page 8*

make it easier for the eastern most parishioners who walked to church in the winter. Douglas left St. John's in October of 1871.

Prescott was single when he arrived in Sayville. He was however, engaged to a young woman from Philadelphia, Josephine French Coffin, the daughter of Parnell W. Coffin and Jessie Peterson Coffin. Coffin had been quite prominent in Philadelphia society. She was to become a devoted and effective helpmate to her husband. The couple would welcome three children, a son Harry Bowman Prescott (1875-1946), a daughter, Jessie Parnella Prescott (1877-1894) and a son, Walter Suydam Prescott (1880-1948).

When Prescott arrived, it was to a small wooden chapel, with no living accommodations for him. What furniture he had was stored, and he began boarding around among his parishioners. Two of these families, Foster and Homan already took in boarders. Both Andrew D. Foster and Isaac Homan were to become incorporators of the new church, St. Ann's. The name change was in memory of the wife and mother of John R. Suydam, who had financed the land on which the chapel was built. Prescott lost no time incorporating the new St. Ann's; the paperwork was filed on 2 May 1874. Mr. Foster and Mr. Suydam became the first Wardens, Messrs. Strong, Reuben Edwards Jr., Seaman and Samuel W. Green were elected the first vestrymen.

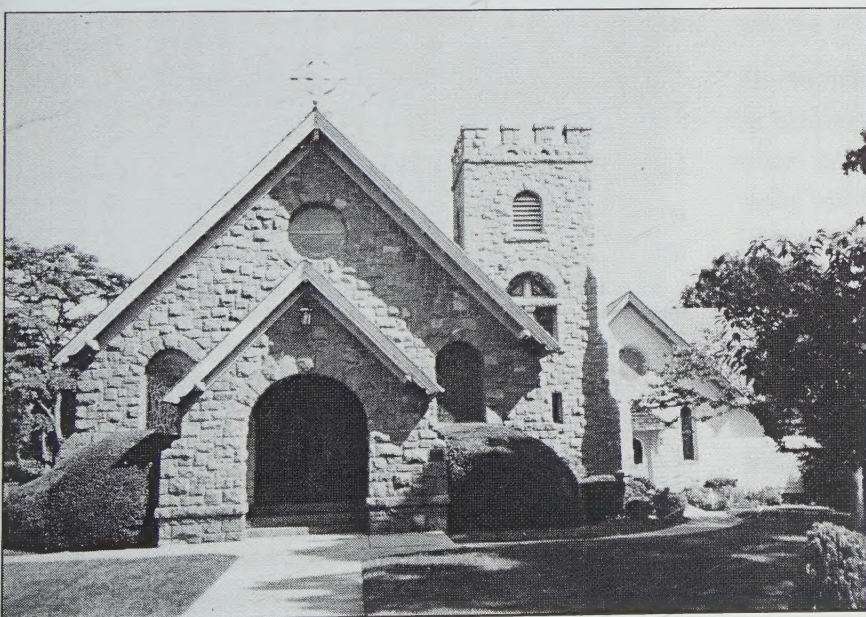
On Trinity Sunday, 31 May 1874, Prescott was ordained to the Priesthood in Brooklyn. At that time, the Vestry of St. Ann's officially called him to be the first Rector of St. Ann's Church. He accepted the call. Shortly after, he and Josephine were married. They set up housekeeping and were soon expecting their first child.

The new Rector threw himself into the work of building St. Ann's into a thriving parish. His earliest days, 1874 to 1878 are mentioned in Libby Homan's diary. Libby had ample opportunity to observe Prescott during his stay with her family prior to his marriage.

Winter at the parish consisted of those who lived year round in Sayville/Bayport, Greenville (West Sayville), Oakdale and Bohemia. Summertime was quite different. Once the railroad came to Sayville in the 1860s, so did the vacationers. They flocked to the inns, or rented summer houses. As the years passed many of the visitors, who were merchants and businessmen from New York City and Brooklyn, bought homes in the area. This packed the little chapel to the point where Prescott and his Vestry realized that they needed a church building. At the 8 March 1887 meeting of the Vestry, Walter Suydam Sr. and his sister, Mrs. R. Fulton (Helen Suydam) Cutting, Jr., submitted a proposal to build a new church if certain conditions were met. These conditions were that a promise was to be made that \$1,600.00 income a year be raised for five years, and \$3,000.00 be raised for

a new horse shed, fences and other improvements. By July of 1887 a good percentage of these monies had been raised. Prescott and I. H. Green, Sr. were appointed to raise the remaining money. Isaac H. Green, Jr., nephew of I. H. Green, Sr. was selected as the architect to design the new church. The young architect had already made a good reputation for himself, designing mansions, public buildings and also the rectory for the Prescott family in 1879.

Prescott, the donors and the Vestry all wanted a Gothic stone building similar to those being built upstate New York. Green came in with a drawing that was exactly



St. Ann's Church, Sayville, New York.

Continued on page 10

what they were looking for. The new church was built in the winter of 1887, completed and dedicated in 1888. Norman in architecture, it was the first stone church in Suffolk County, blending in with the marshland and the river that runs along side it.

Prescott was slowly building the family that was St. Ann's. His original Incorporators, Vestry and Wardens were foremost citizens of Sayville, Bayport and Blue Point. Of all the first parishioners, probably the most helpful in integrating the clergyman into village life were the Greens. Isaac H. Green, Sr. and his brother, Samuel Willett Green were of the second family to settle in the area. The Greens owned the western half of what is now Sayville.

Isaac H. Green, Jr., son of Samuel Willett Green had been a student in the classical school taught by the Rev. Douglas in St. Barnabas Chapel. When Israel Corse donated the money for the rectory in 1879, Isaac Green, Jr. designed and supervised the building. He later designed an addition to hold Prescott's large library and office. The architect and Prescott were also firemen, and both served as members of the Village Improvement Society, the Scientific Society, and other local organizations.

Through the years, Prescott established the first lending library in Sayville, spoke at a host of social functions, as well as serving his parishioners. Because of his good nature, Prescott had friends of all faiths, and each one of them felt that they were special to him.

A chapter could be written about his sense of humor, the practical jokes he played and those that were aimed at him. He could laugh at himself. On one occasion, there was a wedding at which the bridegroom tied his horse and buggy to the Prescott's clothesline, then after the ceremony could not pay the fee. To make matters worse, when the groom drove away, he took the clothesline with him.

Prescott knew and loved people. When Bohemia needed a chapel, Prescott visited Mr. Vanderbilt and explained the necessity for it. 'Many of these people work for you,' he told Vanderbilt. The wealthy gentleman asked Prescott how much he wanted. 'I'll leave that to you,' was his answer. A

week later a check for \$1,000.00 arrived at St. Ann's.

When Prescott passed away on 17 January 1923, the list of his accomplishments was lengthy: incorporating St. Ann's, building the stone church, paying it off, officiating at 574 marriages, 749 burials, and over 1,500 baptisms in the 48 years he served as Rector. He also saw to the building of St. John of the Plains, Bohemia, St. John the Baptist, Center Moriches, and he encouraged the erection of St. Paul's, Patchogue. All with the expertise of Isaac H. Green, Jr.

As Rector and friend, he was there when the Bourne's of Singer Sewing Machine lost their youngest son and he mourned with the family of summer parishioner Edith Corse Evans who was lost with the British liner, Titanic, in 1912. The Prescott's had lost their daughter, Jesse as a school girl in 1894. Jesse and Edith had been close friends.

Befitting his life, the Rev. John Henry Prescott's funeral was attended by so many people, some coming from great distances, that both the church and the parish hall were filled to overflowing. Also fitting the circumstance, there were tears, but there was also laughter. Prescott would have certainly approved.

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Constance Gibson Currie
President, Sayville Historical Society, St. Ann's
Historical Society, and the Long Island Radio & TV
Historical Society
constancec@optonline.net

Texas Military Institute — The Episcopal School of Texas

Texas Military Institute (TMI) — The Episcopal School of Texas is the flagship school and only high school of the Diocese of West Texas. It was founded in 1893 by the Rt. Rev. James Steptoe Johnston, first bishop of the independent Diocese of West Texas. At that time, there was only one public high school in San Antonio and no opportunities for secondary education in many parts of this large diocese. Johnston had been educated at a private school and the University of Virginia; he credited his own Civil War military experience with strengthening his own character. As founder and first rector of this school — then known as West Texas Military Academy, a namesake of the diocese — it was his aim that the school prepare its students for higher education to fit them for the professions, including the priesthood.

TMI, as it has been known since 1926, has been coeducational since 1972 and military-optional since 1976. As in Bishop Johnston's time, students are required to attend daily Morning Prayer services in All Saints Chapel, conducted by the school chaplain, an Episcopal priest. The current bishop serves as chairman of the school's Board of Governors.



A view looking down the campus of TMI — The Episcopal School of Texas, where several Tri-History Conference events will be held. Photo courtesy TMI.

Worship also includes a monthly Eucharist and observances of Days of Obligation such as Ash Wednesday, and the school's chapel hosts Sunday services of Grace Church, San Antonio's newest Episcopal congregation. The campus will host a diocesan Happening youth gath-



Exterior view of the TMI — The Episcopal School of Texas Chapel. Photo courtesy Ford Powell Carson Architects.

ering in August and is the annual venue for a diocesan conference on congregation-building.

Continuing the founder's ideal of modeling servant leadership, TMI requires hours of community service for all students in grades six through twelve. Students participate in projects that benefit Habitat for Humanity, the Ronald McDonald House, the San Antonio Food Bank and the Good Samaritan Center, an aid agency of the Diocese of West Texas.

Completed in 2008, TMI's 500-seat chapel, designed by alumnus Chris Carson '53, received an AIA award for religious architecture and includes a custom-built pipe organ. The bishop, suffragan and retired bishops frequently are celebrants at special services there.

About a third of TMI students elect to be members of the school's Corps of Cadets, an Army JROTC unit which has distinguished itself by earning Honor Unit with Distinction status in annual formal inspections for 19 consecutive years.

TMI currently serves 437 students, about 20 percent of whom identify as Episcopalian. Many TMI students are graduates of area Episcopal primary schools. Nearly 40 TMI alumni are known to have become Episcopal clergy, including two bishops.

*Paula Allen,
Director of News and Information,
History and Archives
TMI - The Episcopal School of Texas
www.tmi-sa.org*

Tri-History Conference

“The Episcopal Church on the Borderlands”

The Tri-History Conference is held every three years and co-sponsored by the Historical Society of the Episcopal Church, the National Episcopal Historians and Archivists and the Episcopal Women's History Project.

Events will be held at St. Mark's Episcopal Church, 315 E. Pecan Street, San Antonio, St. Phillip's College, 1801 Martin Luther King Drive, San Antonio, and the Texas Military Institute, 20955 W Tejas Trail, San Antonio.

Hotel accommodations will be at the St. Anthony Riverwalk Hotel, 300 East Travis Street, with a conference rate of \$109 per night. Registration for accommodations is separate from conference registration. To reserve a hotel room, call 210-227-4329 or 800-WYNDHAM with the group code “Tri-History Conference.” The hotel does not provide shuttle service and parking fees are additional.



Interior view of the Chapel of TMI — The Episcopal School of Texas. Photo courtesy Chuck Gibbons.

For more information about the Tri-History Conference, please see the website www.trihistory.org.

Conference Schedule (subject to change)

Pre-conference Schedule

Monday, 10 June

Afternoon: HSEC Committee Meetings

Evening: HSEC Annual Meeting and Banquet

Tuesday, 11 June

Morning: HSEC Board Meeting

Tri-History Conference Schedule

Tuesday, 11 June

12 to 4: Registration at St. Anthony Riverwalk Hotel

Evening: TMI – The Episcopal School of Texas, Opening Service, Reception

Wednesday, 12 June at St. Philip's College

EWHP Annual Meeting

Conference Banquet with Speaker (TBA)

Panels/Workshops/Presentations:

Pilgrims and Pioneers:

Bishop Leonidas Polk and the efforts to establish the

Episcopal Church in the American Southwest. *Douglas Cupples, Ph.D., Christian Brothers University, Memphis, TN.*

Frontier Clergyman: The Life and Legacy of the Very Rev. Silas Deane Davenport. *The Rev. Jeffery C. Schroeder, M.Div., S.T.M. Fairview Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Madison County, VA.*

Edward Fontaine and the Episcopal Parish in the Old Southwest. *Edward L. Bond, Ph.D., Alabama A & M University.*

The Inculturation of Worship

Latino Popular Religion in the Roman Catholic. *The Rev. Dr. Robert Wright, Oblate School of Theology, San Antonio.*

The Response to Popular Culture in the Iglesia Anglicana de Mexico. *Susan Saucedo Sica, St. Gregory's Episcopal Church, Parsippany, NJ.*

Latin American Music in U.S.A. Churches. *Diana Sanchez-Bushong, Lakeside United Methodist Church, Austin, TX.*

Continued on page 13

Tri-History Conference Program, *continued from page 12*

Workshop

Disaster Planning (NEHA). *Susan Rehkopf, Diocese of Missouri, Matthew P. Payne, Diocese of Fond du Lac and Dave Mistick, Sacred Builders.*

Thursday, 13 June at St. Mark's Episcopal Church

NEHA Annual Meeting

River Dinner Cruise

Panels/Workshops/Presentations:

Oral History (EWHP). *The Rev. Dr. Matilda E. G. Dunn, Chattanooga, TN and Susan Riggs Guise, Redington Shores, FL.*

Keeping Archives, Keeping Faith: The Episcopal Church Archives' Mission of History and Evangelism. *Mark Duffy, Canonical Archivist of the Episcopal Church, Austin, TX.*

Writing a Parish History, *Lewis F. Fisher, Author of Saint Mark's Episcopal Church: 150 Years of Ministry in Downtown San Antonio, 1858-2008.*

The Episcopal Church in Latin America

Anglicanism in Mexico: Iglesia de Jesús to José Guadalupe Saucedo. *David Allen White, M.L.S., Historical Commission of the Episcopal Diocese of West Texas.*

Anglicanism in Mexico during the 19th century. *Margarita Contreras, Instituto Cultural Helenico, Mexico City.*

Ministry among Native Americans

President Ulysses S. Grant's Peace Policy toward Native Americans and the Ministry of the Episcopal Church. *The Rev. Robert W. Prichard, Virginia Theological Seminary.*

Scandal on the Mission Frontier: The Trial of Samuel D. Hinman. *The Rev. Robyn Neville, General Theological Seminary.*

The Patron Saint to the Navajo of the San Juan. *Cathlena Plummer, Church Divinity School of the Pacific.*

Education on the Borders

Bishop James Steptoe Johnston and the Texas Military Institute. *Paula Allen, Texas Military Institute, San Antonio.*

Artemisia Bowden. *Dr. Marie Thurston, St. Philip's College.*

Friday, 14 June

Trip to the Mission San José

Native American Worship Service

St. Philip's College: One Site for the Tri-History Conference

St. Philip's College is the only college to be federally designated as both a historically Black college and a Hispanic-serving institution. In 1898 James Steptoe Johnston, a bishop of St. Philip's Episcopal Church of the West Texas Diocese, founded St. Philip's Normal and Industrial School, which was designed to educate and train recently emancipated slaves. The school began as a weekend sewing class for six black girls taught by Alice G. Cowan, a missionary with the Episcopal Church. During its early history, the institution was known as Bowden's School.

In 1902 Artemisia Bowden, daughter of a former slave, joined the school as administrator and teacher. Bowden served St. Philip's College for 52 years. Under her lead-

ership, the school grew from an industrial school for girls into a high school and later a junior college. In 1917, the school moved from La Villita to its present location.

By 1927 St. Philip's was a junior college for the black community of San Antonio and the surrounding area. However, during the Great Depression, the Episcopal Church was unable to continue financial support for the school. Bowden, now the president of St. Philip's College, fought to keep the school afloat. She frequently used her own money to pay teachers and to keep the doors open. In a fundraising effort, she traveled around the country with a quartet of singing students soliciting donations for the historically black college.

Continued on page 15

"The Episcopal Church on the Borderlands"

Tri-History Conference

Tuesday, 11 June - Friday, 14 June 2013, San Antonio, Texas

REGISTRATION FORM

Registration forms must be postmarked by 1 June 2013. No refunds for cancellations after 1 June 2013.

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City, State & Zip _____

Phone (____) _____ E-mail _____

Organizational Membership (mark all that apply) ☐ Episcopal Women's History Project (EWHP) ☐ National Episcopal Historians and Archivists (NEHA) ☐ Historical Society of the Episcopal Church (HSEC) ☐ No affiliation ☐ Send membership information about _____

Tri-History Conference Experience ☐ Never attended before ☐ One previous Tri-History Conference at _____ ☐ Many Tri-History Conferences at _____

For planning purposes, do you intend to join the Friday trip to Mission San Jose? ☐ Yes ☐ No

FEES (per person)

Quantity	Type	Amount	Total
_____	Full registration, postmarked before or on April 1	\$170 per person	= _____
_____	Full registration, postmarked after April 1	\$195 per person	= _____
_____	Single day, Tuesday @ TMI	\$30 per person	= _____
_____	Single day, Wednesday @ St. Philip's with Banquet	\$75 per person	= _____
_____	Single day, Thursday @ St. Mark's with River Dinner Cruise	\$75 per person	= _____
_____	Single day, Friday @ Mission San Jose	\$25 per person	= _____

Scholarship Fund: Donation to assist others who may not otherwise be able to attend, especially students.

Funds unused will be held to fund scholarships to the next Tri-History Conference. = _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED = _____

Please make check payable to:

EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF WEST TEXAS (note "Tri-History Conference" in memo line on check)

Please mail completed form and check to:

SUSAN HARDAWAY
EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF WEST TEXAS
PO BOX 6885
SAN ANTONIO, TX 78209

PLEASE ADVISE OF ANY DIETARY OR PHYSICAL NEEDS WITH THIS FORM

In 1942 the school, retaining the St. Philip's Junior College name, affiliated with San Antonio College and the San Antonio Independent School District, marking the end of the college's era as a private institution. Three years later, an elected district board of trustees, named the San Antonio Union Junior College District (now Alamo Community College District), assumed administration of the two colleges. In 1955 St. Philip's College began admitting white students, and San Antonio College began admitting black students.

In 1987 St. Philip's added the Southwest Campus, a hub for technical training programs and formerly part of Kelly Air Force Base, as an official campus. It had previously served as a district extension center.

Between 1990 and 1997, a multi-million-dollar capital expansion added major buildings; a state-of-the-art theater complex at the MLK campus; the Northeast Learning Center in 1996; and the Learning and Leadership Development Center in 1997 (in collaboration with the City of San Antonio).

Adapted from St. Philip's website
<http://www.alamo.edu/main.aspx?id=3712>

puter and flatbed scanner in the Archives. The computer itself was more than six years old and the scanner was not of the quality required for digitizing some of our most important — and awkwardly sized — historic materials. The two new pieces of equipment will hold us in good stead for at least five years.

I am writing this report during my sabbatical from 1 January to 31 March 2012, during which I'm completing the first draft of a long-planned biography of the Right Reverend George Washington Doane, second bishop of New Jersey. It is my hope that at the end of my sabbatical, I shall be well on the way to completing and publishing a book that I have been researching for more than 18 years. Bishop Doane was an important figure in American church history and a fascinating person in his own right. I hope I can do him justice.

Respectfully submitted,
Canon Cynthia McFarland, January 2013

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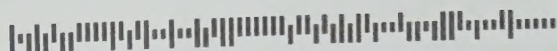
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Coming Event!

Tri-History Conference:

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